

TYPE: HUMAN RESOURCES

POLICY TITLE: Accommodation for Religious Beliefs

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College is committed to embracing the worth of every individual, creating a place for all people, and promoting the respectful environment necessary for intellectual and personal discovery. Removing barriers to serve a diverse population with a variety of religious beliefs and practices sustains this principle.

NWTC may provide a reasonable accommodation based on a person's sincerely held religious belief. In making this determination, NWTC reviews a variety of factors, including whether the accommodation would create an undue hardship for the College. The accommodation request imposes responsibilities and obligations on both the requesting individual and the College.

Once a request is made, NWTC will explore reasonable accommodations. Both parties are expected to be engaged in the attempts to accommodate the request. When more than one accommodation is possible, the College may select any of the accommodations, provided the accommodation will effectively eliminate the religious conflict. NWTC may request documentation to support the need for an accommodation. Further, the College may need to discuss the nature of the religious belief(s) or practice(s) with the religion's spiritual leader (if applicable) or a religious scholar. A [list of religious observances and holidays](#) of which the College is aware are posted on the [Policy's webpage](#) and the [Diversity intranet](#) page.

At any point in the process, an employee or student may contact the Director of Diversity & Inclusion/Title IX Coordinator, Mohammed Bey, at mohammed.bey@nwtc.edu or (920) 498-6826, for guidance and feedback. If an employee or student feels they have been discriminated against, they may submit a complaint to Director of Diversity & Inclusion/Title IX Coordinator or via the online [reporting form](#). The grievance procedure can be found in the [Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#).

Students

Students who have sincerely held religious beliefs and/or practices and require exemption from participation in specific classroom activities, examinations or other academic requirements, or an absence, will be subject to the following procedures:

Student Responsibilities

1. Students are responsible to meet with their instructors to discuss, in confidence, their potential absence or conflicts with academic requirements based on sincerely held religious beliefs after course competencies, curriculum and expectations have been discussed with the class.
2. Students are to report in writing to the course instructor, during the first five academic days of class, of known potential conflicts with religious observations. **Any exceptions to this timeframe need to be mutual agreed upon between student and instructor.**

3. Make-up assignments provided by instructors will be within seven academic days to avoid prejudicial effect to a student's preparation. The instructor is not obligated to schedule a make-up assignment before the regularly scheduled requirements are due.

Instructor Responsibilities

The instructor is expected to treat information conveyed by a student regarding their religious beliefs as confidential. The instructor also has a responsibility to facilitate reasonable accommodations based on student request and to schedule make-up work in a timely manner to avoid prejudicial effect to the student.

Student Grievance Procedure

A student who feels that an instructor did not make a reasonable accommodation should appeal the decision through the [Student Academic Grievance Procedure](#) found in the Student Handbook.

Employees

Employee Responsibilities

An employee who is seeking a religious accommodation must submit a written request to their immediate supervisor. The written request will include the type of religious conflict that exists and the employee's suggested accommodation.

Supervisor Responsibilities

The immediate supervisor will evaluate the request considering whether a work conflict exists due to a sincerely held religious belief or practice and whether a reasonable accommodation is available. Depending on the type of conflict and suggested accommodation, the supervisor may confer with their leader or their HR Partner.

The supervisor and employee will meet to discuss the request and decision on an accommodation. If the employee accepts the proposed religious accommodation, the immediate supervisor will implement the decision. If the employee rejects the proposed accommodation, he or she may appeal by contacting their area's Dean, Director, or HR Partner.

Approved 3/25/16